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THE YORK MINSTER MANUSCRIPTS.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES :

SIRS: In a notice (*Romania* xviii, p. 188) of my description of the French MSS. of York Minster Library (MOD. LANG. NOTES, Dec. 1888), MR. PAUL MEYER states that I knew him to have prepared for publication a description of the same MSS. I shall be obliged if you will allow me to correct this statement, which is without any foundation in fact. As to the heliogravures to which M. MEYER refers, I have never had the opportunity of seeing them, or indeed any of the facsimiles of the *École des Chartes*; nor had I any idea that any sheets of the York MSS. were to be found among them.

Faithfully yours,

FREDERIC SPENCER.

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VARIA.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES :

SIRS:—Is it the scansion or the accent that arrests one's attention in the last line of this citation from MR. E. H. PLUMPTRE's translation of SOPHOCLES' "Antigone" (Do not make me say Sophocles's)?

"Lead, lead her on,
Without delay, and, as I said, immure
In yon cavernous tomb, and then depart." l. 889.

One may fancy a diversion of a legal phrase in the following: "Two years afterwards CONSTANTIUS CHLORUS *recovered* the province of Britain *to* the Empire."

BURTON's 'History of Scotland,' vol. 1, p. 41.

Whatever reasons may be given for the prevalent use of "were" after "as if," no one of them appears to have influenced MR. ROSE, the translator of ARIOSTO; for, in his "Introduction," he writes: "And in perusing it, the reader always feels as if he *is* swimming with the stream."

Here is a convenient singular: "The description in this *Annal* seems to imply that the residence at Merton covered a considerable area." EARLE, 'Two of the Saxon Chronicles,' p. 292.

What is the use of keeping a few traces of the dual except for the sake of exception? Here we see one in the act of disappearing:

"While the military command was divided *between* three generals." RHYS, 'Celtic Britain,' p. 100.

Men have sought out many ways of forming the plural of nouns; but the Anglo-Indian would seem to think that as *arch* makes *arches*, so *conch* should make *conches*. Witness RUDYARD KIPLING, 'Departmental Ditties,' p. 52:

"Black night behind the tamarisks—the owls begin
their chorus—

As the *conches* from the temple scream and bray.

With the fruitless years behind us and the hopeless
years before us,

Let us honor,, oh (*sic*) my brothers, Christmas Day."

ANDREW INGRAHAM.

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BRIEF MENTION.

Arkiv för Nordisk Filologi, utg. genom AXEL KOCK. Femte Bandet. Nj Följd. Första Bandet, Häftet 3. Lund, 1889.—"Tvivlsomme ord i Norges gamle love," by EBBE HERTZBERG, with which this number of the *Arkiv* opens, is an attempt by a legal authority to explain certain Old Norse legal terms either untranslated or wrongly translated by lexicographers. The suggestions are many of them very valuable and certainly deserve the attention of all Icelandic students. *Síðraðr*, one of the words explained, is spelled with a short *z*. With this exception, the forms are correctly given. It is a subject for congratulation that the inquiry is to be continued. All the other original articles are devoted to the subject of Icelandic poetry. In "Med hvilken ret kaldes skaldesproget kunstigt?" HJ. FALK discusses the artificial character of Icelandic poetry. After explaining in detail the principal figures employed by the skalds, the author reaches the conclusion that, while the poetry of the North in its early existence was full of life and spirit, its tendency was to grow constantly more and more artificial and mechanical, until finally the circumlocutions are entirely without meaning, and often misleading. Anyone that has worked over these later poetic attempts will acknowledge the soundness of this criticism. JANUS JÓNSSON and FINNUR JÓNSSON discuss a troublesome word in "Um orðið *vigg*." "Nogle bemærkninger til et versi